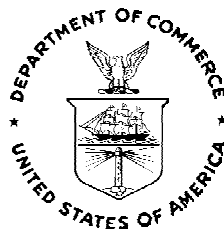
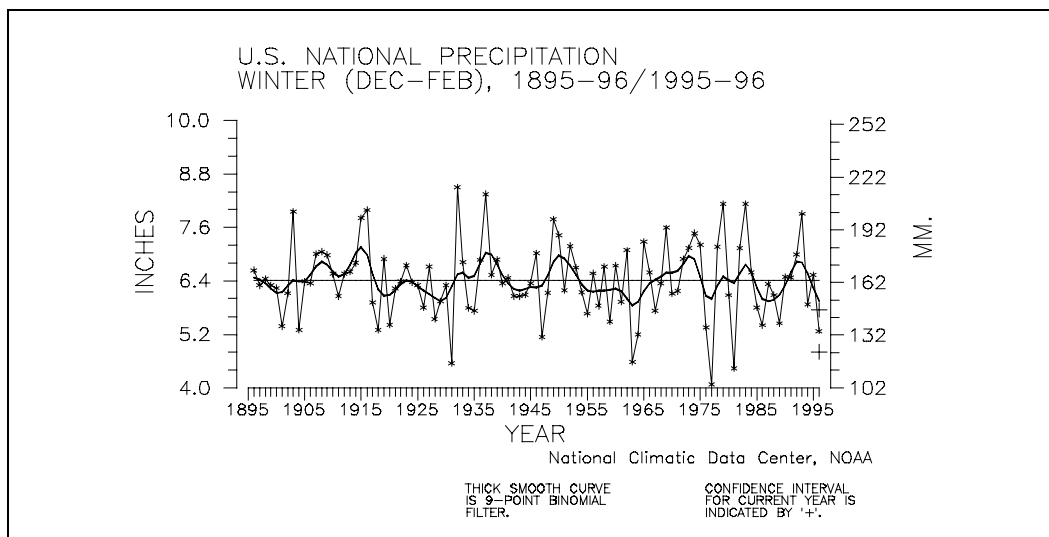
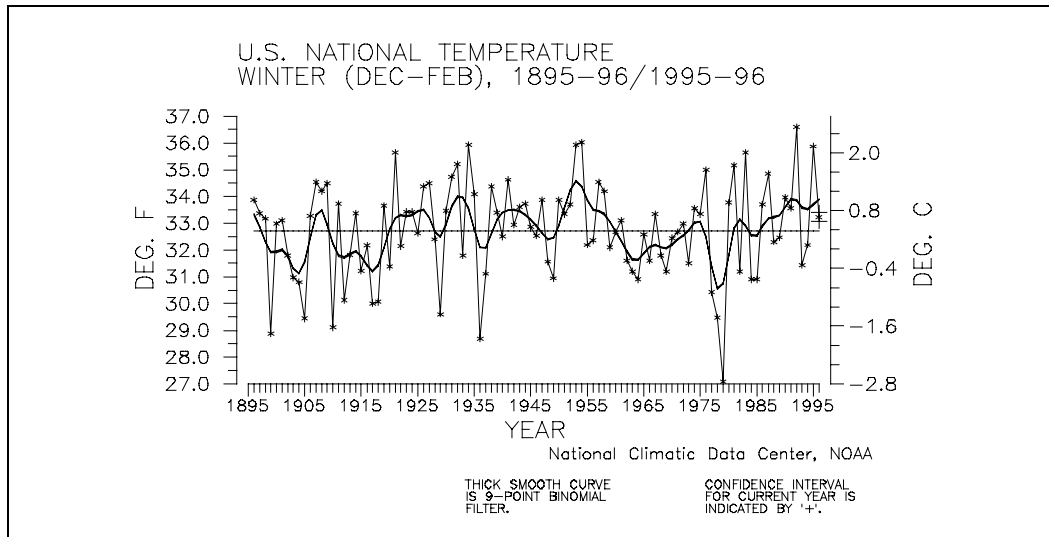


CLIMATE VARIATIONS BULLETIN



This CLIMATE VARIATIONS BULLETIN (CVB) is a preliminary report that puts current monthly climate anomalies into historical perspective using climate databases archived at the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC). It is issued on a monthly basis. Supplemental sections are included which address seasonal and annual perspectives, when appropriate.

Current data are based on preliminary reports from First and Second Order airport stations obtained from the National Weather Service (NWS) Climate Analysis Center, and preliminary tornado statistics obtained from the NWS National Severe Storms Forecast Center. THE CURRENT DATA SHOULD BE USED WITH CAUTION. These preliminary data are useful for estimating how current anomalies compare to the historical record, however the actual values and rankings for the current year will change as the final data arrive at NCDC and are processed.

The following NCDC datasets are used for the historical data: the climate division drought database (TD-9640), the hurricane datasets (TD-9636 and TD-9697), the tornado dataset (STORM DATA), and the monthly station dataset (LCD supplemental files). It should be noted that the climate division drought database consists of monthly data for 344 climate divisions in the contiguous United States. These divisional values are calculated from the 6000+ station Cooperative Observer network.

The narrative, tables, and graphs in the CVB are also available via automated facsimile. The previous month's summary can be obtained after the tenth of the month by dialing 704-271-4570 and selecting the appropriate menu codes. A touch-tone fax machine is required.

If you have access to the Internet, copies of the CVB are available via both the NCDC's World Wide Web (WWW) server and the NCDC's anonymous FTP server.

NCDC's WWW server

URL for the CVB: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/publications/cvb/cvb.html>

NCDC's anonymous FTP server

Machine: <ftp.ncdc.noaa.gov>

Directory: [/pub/data/cvb](ftp://ftp.ncdc.noaa.gov/pub/data/cvb)

If you are a climate researcher and would like to order copies of the historical datasets used to make graphs of the type in this report, call 704-271-4994 or fax a letter to 704-271-4876 or mail a letter to the address given below, ATTN: Research User Services.

All other questions or requests for data should be made by calling 704-271-4800 or sending a fax to 704-271-4876 or by writing to:

National Climatic Data Center, NOAA
Federal Building
151 Patton Avenue, Room 120
Asheville, NC 28801-5001

If you use any of the information from this CVB, please identify "National Climatic Data Center, NOAA" as the source.

UNITED STATES FEBRUARY CLIMATE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

William O. Brown
National Climatic Data Center, NOAA
Global Climate Lab, Global Analysis Branch
Federal Building
Asheville, NC 28801 USA

Preliminary data for February 1996 indicate that temperature averaged across the contiguous United States was above the long-term mean (see Figure 1). February 1996, with an averaged temperature of 36.0° (F), ranked as the 32nd warmest February since national records began in 1895. The 1996 value is based on preliminary data, which has been shown to be within 0.34°F (0.19°C) of the final data over a 7-year period. This confidence interval is indicated in the figure by '+'. The darker smooth curve is a nine-point binomial filter that averages out the year-to-year fluctuations and shows the longer-term variations. Roughly twelve percent of the country averaged much warmer than normal while none of the country averaged much cooler than normal for February 1996.

With an areally-averaged national precipitation value of 1.38 inches, February 1996 was the 7th driest February on record. The preliminary value for precipitation is estimated to be accurate to within 0.15 inches (3.81 millimeters) and the confidence interval is plotted in Figure 2 as a '+'. Nearly 40% of the country experienced much drier than normal conditions while only four percent was much wetter than normal. February 1996 marked the second consecutive such month with precipitation well below the long-term mean.

Historical precipitation is shown in a different way in Figure 3. The February precipitation for each climate division in the contiguous U.S. was first standardized using the gamma distribution over the 1931-90 period. These gamma-standardized values were then weighted by area and averaged to determine a national standardized precipitation value. These national weighted values were then normalized over their period of record. Negative values are drier and positive values are wetter than the mean. This index gives a more accurate indication of how precipitation across the country compares to the local normal (60-year average) climate. The preliminary national standardized precipitation ranked February 1996 as the 2nd driest such month on record. This standardized z-score is estimated to be accurate to within 0.122 index

units and the confidence interval is plotted in Figure 3 as an 'X'.

National averaged temperature for the two-month period January-February 1996 is shown in Figure 4. Temperature for the two-month period was only slightly above the long-term mean ranking as the 47th warmest such period since 1895.

In order to show more of a historical perspective, the precipitation and temperature rankings for the periods September 1995-February 1996 and March 1995-February 1996, the February 1996 temperature rankings and categorical precipitation standings for the nine climatically homogeneous regions, as well as the national rankings, are listed in Table 1.

The regional rankings for temperature for the month of February indicate that temperatures were cooler than normal for the eastern half and warmer than normal for the western half of the country excluding the Northwest region. February 1996 was the 39th coolest February on record for the Northwest region (Figure 5). An abundance of cloud cover and precipitation is at least partially responsible for this anomaly. The Northeast region had the 35th warmest February since 1895 while the Southeast had the 42nd coolest February on record. It was the 11th warmest February for the Southwest region (Figure 6) and the 19th warmest February on record for the West region.

Every region of the country except the Northwest and West regions were within the dry-third of the historical distribution. Thanks to a rather persistent onshore flow, compliments of a Pacific-originated storm track, the Northwest and West regions were within the wet-third of the distribution.

Figure 7A shows, in illustrative map form, the February 1996 temperature rankings for the 48 contiguous states. Three states were within the top ten warmest of the historical distribution. February 1996 was the third warmest such month for Arizona, sixth warmest for New Mexico and the eighth warmest for

Maine. Twelve other states were within the warm-third of the distribution. No state was within the top ten coolest category of the historical distribution for the month of February while only three states (DE, FL, & WA) were within the cool third of the distribution.

February 1996 state categorical ranks for precipitation are shown in Figure 7B. Five states ranked within the wet-third of the historical distribution while 32 states ranked within the dry third. ***It should also be noted that these February state categorical precipitation ranks are preliminary and should be used with considerable caution due to the high variability of precipitation on a small space and time scale.***

Long-term drought coverage in the United States during February increased while the area of the country experiencing severe to extreme wetness dropped roughly five percent. Nationally, long-term drought conditions (as defined by the Palmer Drought Index) for February 1996 increased to about ten percent of the country while the percent coverage of severe to extreme wet area fell to about an seventh of the country (Figure 8). Table 2 lists the precipitation ranks and statistics for selected river basins for the 1995-1996 Hydrologic Year. The core wet areas included the northern Great Plains, upper Mississippi valley, the northern Rockies, and portions of the interior Northwest. The Palmer dry areas included the entire Southwest region, the Great Basin, central and southern Rockies, central and southern High Plains, central and southern Plains, middle and lower Mississippi valley region, and portions of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Precipitation across the Primary Hard Red Winter Wheat Belt for the five-month period averaged much below normal for the October 1995 through February 1996 growing season-to-date and now stands at near-record lows (Figure 9). Not since the growing season of 1966-67 have precipitation deficits been comparable.

Table 3 shows extremes, 1961-90 normals, and the February 1996 values for both precipitation and temperature for the nine regions and the contiguous U.S.

According to preliminary data from the National Weather Service's National Severe Storms Forecast Center, there were 13 tornadoes across the contiguous United States in February 1996. The 1953-1995 average tornado count for February is 20. Only two tornadoes were reported in February 1964 while 83

were documented in February 1971. It should be noted that the preliminary tornado count is generally higher than the final count.

Preliminary winter (December-February) data for 1995-96 indicate that temperature averaged across the contiguous United States was above the long-term mean (Figure 10), ranking as the 46th warmest winter on record (Table 4). About one-seventh of the country averaged much warmer than normal while about one percent averaged much cooler than normal for the winter season.

Areally-averaged winter precipitation for the nation was below the long-term mean, ranking winter season 1995-96 as the seventh driest such season in the 101-year record (Figure 11). The national standardized precipitation index (Figure 12) ranked winter 1995-96 as the fourth driest winter on record. (The preceding monthly report explains how this index is computed.) More than a third of the contiguous United States averaged much drier than normal for December-February 1995-96, while about seven percent experienced much wetter than normal conditions.

The temperature ranks and precipitation categorical ranks for the winter season, December 1995 through February 1996, for the nine climatically homogeneous regions in the United States are listed in Table 4. The average winter temperature pattern was characterized by a simple ridge-trough pattern, with unusual warmth in the west and temperatures slightly below normal from the northern Plains to the Southeast and northward. The preliminary data indicate that the Southeast region had the 22nd coolest winter season since 1895-96 (Figure 13) while the West region ranked fifth warmest (Figure 15) and Southwest sixth warmest (Table 4).

The winter season precipitation categorical rankings (Table 4) show a wet season occurred for the Northwest region, reflecting numerous Pacific storms during the three-month period. The West, Northeast, and East-North Central regions were all in the mid-third of the distribution while the remainder of the country was drier than normal for winter season 1995-96.

Table 5 shows extremes, 1961-1990 normals, and the 1996 winter season values for both precipitation and temperature for the nine regions and the contiguous U.S.

Figure 14A shows, in illustrative map form, the Winter 1995-96 temperature rankings for the 48 contiguous states. Three states were within the top ten warmest of the historical distribution. Winter 1995-96 was the second warmest such season for Arizona, fourth warmest for California, and seventh warmest for New Mexico. Eight other states were within the warm third of the historical distribution. No state was within the top ten coolest category of the historical distribution for the season while twenty states were within the cool third of the distribution.

Winter state categorical ranks for precipitation are shown in Figure 14B. Eight states ranked within the wet third of the distribution while 27 states ranked within the dry third. As with the February statistics, it should be noted that these categorical precipitation ranks are preliminary and should be used with considerable caution.

According to preliminary data from the National Weather Service's National Severe Storms Forecast Center, there were 56 tornadoes across the contiguous United States during the three-month winter season. The 1953-1994 average winter tornado count is 53. The extremes: 149 tornadoes in 1983 and 13 in 1985. It should be noted that the preliminary tornado count is generally higher than the final count and that the tornado observations have generally improved with time as better observing practices and instrumentation (especially weather radar and satellites) were utilized.

TABLE 1. PRECIPITATION AND TEMPERATURE RANKS, BASED
ON THE PERIOD 1895-1996. 1 = DRIEST/COLDEST,
102 = WARMEST FOR FEBRUARY 1996 TEMPERATURES,
101 = WETTEST/WARMEST FOR SEP 1995-FEB 1996,
101 = WETTEST/WARMEST FOR MAR 1995-FEB 1996.
PRESENT MONTH PRECIPITATION EXPRESSED CATEGORICALLY:
WET = WET 1/3 OF THE HISTORICAL DISTRIBUTION,
MID = WITHIN THE MIDDLE 1/3 OF THE DISTRIBUTION,
DRY = DRY 1/3 OF THE HISTORICAL DISTRIBUTION.

REGION	FEB 1996	SEP 1995- FEB 1996	MAR 1995- FEB 1996
-----	----	-----	-----
PRECIPITATION:			
NORTHEAST	DRY	92	23
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	DRY	63	78
CENTRAL	DRY	17	46
SOUTHEAST	DRY	65	60
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	DRY	67	97
SOUTH	DRY	5	32
SOUTHWEST	DRY	2	28
NORTHWEST	WET	89	98
WEST	WET	31	86
NATIONAL	DRY	23	64
TEMPERATURE:			
NORTHEAST	68	30	53
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	59	13	31
CENTRAL	59	17	41
SOUTHEAST	42	18	36
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	71	40	33
SOUTH	71	54	46
SOUTHWEST	92	100	90
NORTHWEST	39	79	71
WEST	84	101	87
NATIONAL	71	55	59

TABLE 2.

STATISTICS FOR SELECTED RIVER BASINS:
 AREAL PERCENT OF THE BASIN EXPERIENCING SEVERE OR
 EXTREME LONG-TERM (PALMER) DROUGHT, AND AREAL PERCENT
 OF THE BASIN EXPERIENCING SEVERE OR EXTREME LONG-TERM
 (PALMER) WET CONDITIONS, AS OF FEBRUARY 1996.
 RIVER BASIN REGIONS AS DEFINED BY THE U.S. WATER
 RESOURCES COUNCIL.

RIVER BASIN -----	% AREA DRY -----	% AREA WET -----
MISSOURI BASIN	2.1%	35.9%
PACIFIC NORTHWEST BASIN	.0%	51.4%
CALIFORNIA RIVER BASIN	35.4%	17.8%
GREAT BASIN	12.5%	18.2%
UPPER COLORADO BASIN	.0%	.0%
LOWER COLORADO BASIN	59.6%	.0%
RIO GRANDE BASIN	39.2%	.0%
ARKANSAS-WHITE-RED BASIN	8.4%	.0%
TEXAS GULF COAST BASIN	.0%	.0%
SOURIS-RED-RAINY BASIN	.0%	89.6%
UPPER MISSISSIPPI BASIN	.0%	16.2%
LOWER MISSISSIPPI BASIN	17.8%	.0%
GREAT LAKES BASIN	.0%	6.7%
OHIO RIVER BASIN	4.6%	.0%
TENNESSEE RIVER BASIN	.0%	.0%
NEW ENGLAND BASIN	.0%	7.7%
MID-ATLANTIC BASIN	.0%	.0%
SOUTH ATLANTIC-GULF BASIN	.0%	5.1%

TABLE 3. EXTREMES, 1961-90 NORMALS, AND 1996 VALUES FOR FEBRUARY. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE 1996 VALUES WILL CHANGE DUE TO THE USE OF A DENSER STATION NETWORK.

REGION	PRECIPITATION (INCHES)				NORMAL PCPN	1996 PCPN
	DRIEST VALUE	YEAR	WETTEST VALUE	YEAR		
NORTHEAST	.70	1987	5.43	1900	2.65	2.16
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	.31	1987	2.40	1922	.95	.78
CENTRAL	.67	1947	5.46	1909	2.64	1.54
SOUTHEAST	1.36	1898	7.16	1903	4.15	2.11
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	.30	1985	1.07	1936	.55	.36
SOUTH	.55	1996	5.63	1903	2.30	.55
SOUTHWEST	.14	1972	2.07	1980	.80	.42
NORTHWEST	.69	1920	5.95	1904	2.86	4.26
WEST	.21	1964	6.49	1986	2.27	2.81
NATIONAL	.96	1947	3.05	1903	1.98	1.38*

* PRELIMINARY VALUE, CONFIDENCE
INTERVAL + OR - .15 INCHES

REGION	TEMPERATURE (DEGREES F)				NORMAL TEMP	1996 TEMP
	COLDEST VALUE	YEAR	WARMEST VALUE	YEAR		
NORTHEAST	11.6	1934	31.6	1984	23.3	25.2
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	1.1	1936	29.6	1954	17.6	17.8
CENTRAL	20.6	1978	41.8	1930	32.2	34.2
SOUTHEAST	37.8	1895	56.4	1927	47.1	47.0
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	2.7	1936	34.5	1954	22.2	23.5
SOUTH	33.7	1905	53.5	1930	45.2	48.0
SOUTHWEST	25.1	1903	42.8	1995	35.9	39.8
NORTHWEST	23.3	1933	39.7	1963	33.5	32.0
WEST	32.6	1903	48.8	1963	42.7	44.9
NATIONAL	26.3	1899	42.1	1954	34.3	36.0*

* PRELIMINARY VALUE, CONFIDENCE
INTERVAL + OR - .3 DEG. F.

TABLE 4. TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION RANKINGS FOR DEC 1995-
 FEB 1996, BASED ON THE PERIOD 1895-96 TO 1995-96.
 1 = COLDEST, 101 = HOTTEST.
 PRECIPITATION EXPRESSED CATEGORICALLY:
 WET = WET 1/3 OF THE HISTORICAL DISTRIBUTION,
 MID = WITHIN THE MIDDLE 1/3 OF THE DISTRIBUTION,
 DRY = DRY 1/3 OF THE HISTORICAL DISTRIBUTION.

REGION -----	PRECIPITATION -----	TEMPERATURE -----
NORTHEAST	MID	36
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	MID	30
CENTRAL	DRY	39
SOUTHEAST	DRY	22
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	DRY	45
SOUTH	DRY	66
SOUTHWEST	DRY	96
NORTHWEST	WET	65
WEST	MID	97
NATIONAL	DRY	56

TABLE 5. EXTREMES, 1961-90 NORMALS, AND 1995-96 VALUES
FOR DECEMBER-FEBRUARY

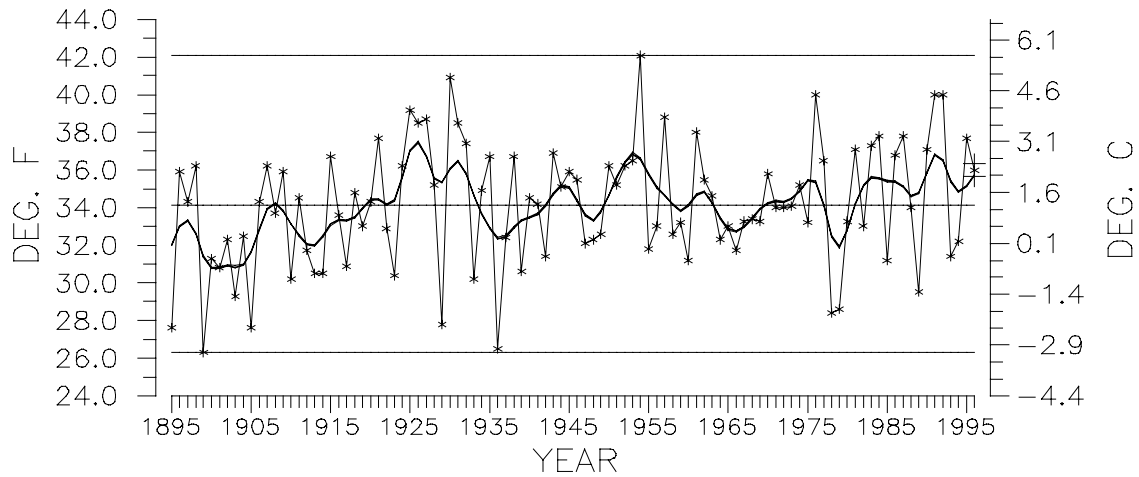
REGION	PRECIPITATION (INCHES)				NORMAL PCPN	1996 PCPN
	DRIEST VALUE	YEAR	WETTEST VALUE	YEAR		
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
NORTHEAST	4.56	1980	13.97	1979	8.94	8.52
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	1.61	1931	5.55	1969	3.50	3.50
CENTRAL	4.24	1963	17.30	1950	8.60	6.80
SOUTHEAST	5.77	1938	16.54	1936	12.15	8.87
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	.84	1931	2.90	1969	1.81	1.51
SOUTH	3.57	1918	13.12	1932	6.88	4.00
SOUTHWEST	.93	1904	6.53	1993	2.58	1.02
NORTHWEST	3.86	1977	15.73	1965	10.69	12.50
WEST	2.52	1977	15.87	1969	7.18	8.47
NATIONAL	4.08	1977	8.50	1932	6.35	5.28*

* PRELIMINARY VALUE, CONFIDENCE
INTERVAL + OR - .47 INCHES

REGION	TEMPERATURE (DEGREES F)				NORMAL TEMP	1996 TEMP
	COLDEST VALUE	YEAR	WARMEST VALUE	YEAR		
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
NORTHEAST	16.6	1918	30.7	1932	23.7	23.2
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	8.4	1936	24.5	1987	16.4	15.5
CENTRAL	23.9	1978	40.8	1932	31.1	31.6
SOUTHEAST	41.2	1978	55.5	1932	46.2	45.1
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	9.5	1979	27.6	1992	19.4	18.9
SOUTH	38.0	1905	48.6	1952	43.1	44.7
SOUTHWEST	27.3	1933	38.4	1981	33.2	36.7
NORTHWEST	21.7	1949	37.2	1934	30.5	31.4
WEST	31.7	1949	43.9	1981	39.9	43.0
NATIONAL	27.1	1979	36.6	1992	32.3	33.2*

* PRELIMINARY VALUE, CONFIDENCE
INTERVAL + OR - .2 DEG. F.

U.S. NATIONAL TEMPERATURE FEBRUARY, 1895–1996



National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

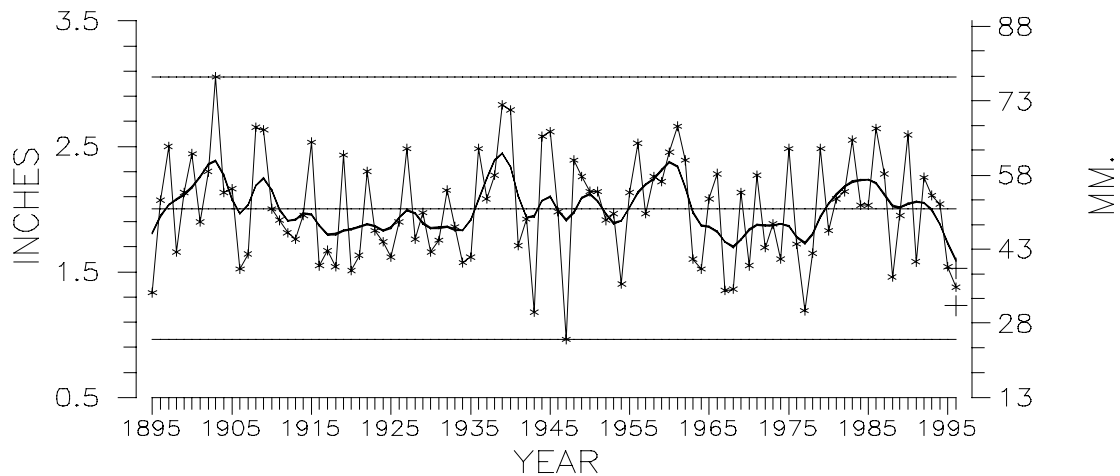
STRAIGHT HORIZONTAL LINES ARE:
MAXIMUM VALUE (TOP),
LONG-TERM AVERAGE (MIDDLE),
MINIMUM VALUE (BOTTOM)

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
FOR CURRENT YEAR IS
INDICATED BY '+'.
+

Figure 1

U.S. NATIONAL PRECIPITATION FEBRUARY, 1895–1996



National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

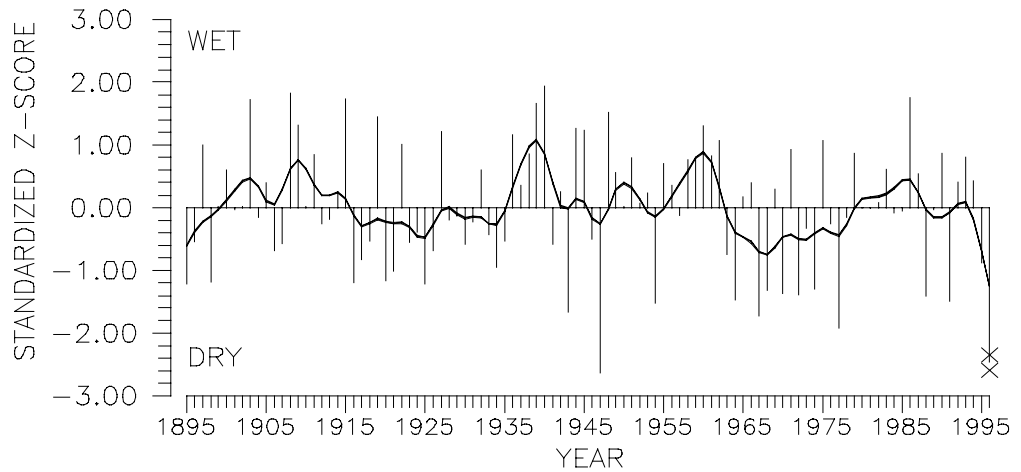
STRAIGHT HORIZONTAL LINES ARE:
MAXIMUM VALUE (TOP),
LONG-TERM AVERAGE (MIDDLE),
MINIMUM VALUE (BOTTOM)

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
FOR CURRENT YEAR IS
INDICATED BY '+'.
+

Figure 2

U.S. NATIONAL NORMALIZED PRECIPITATION INDEX
FEBRUARY, 1895–1996



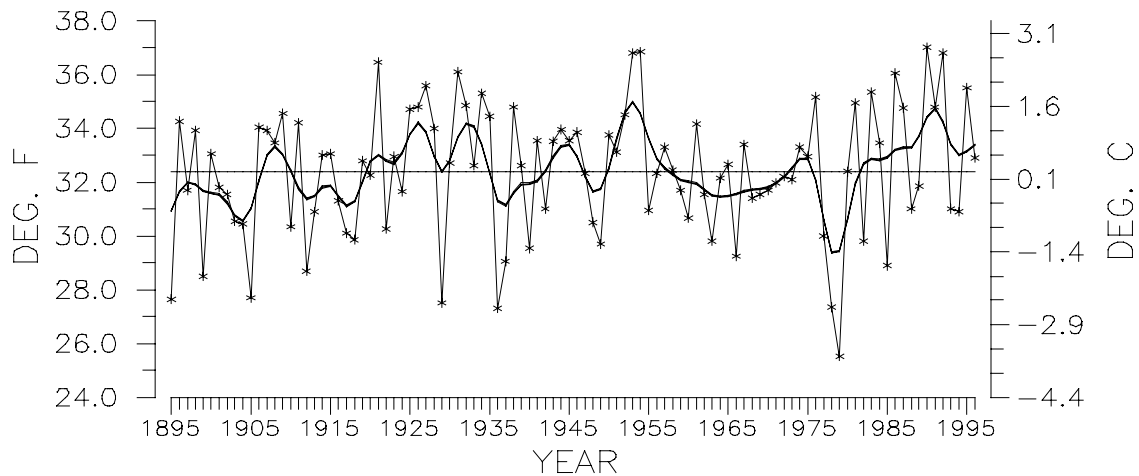
National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
FOR CURRENT YEAR IS
INDICATED BY 'X'.

Figure 3

U.S. NATIONAL TEMPERATURE
JANUARY–FEBRUARY, 1895–1996

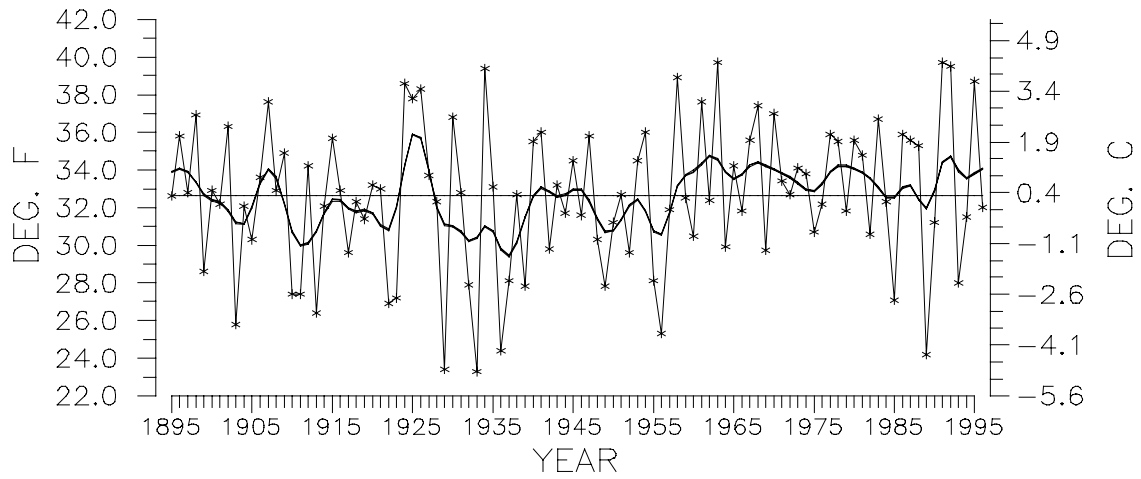


National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

Figure 4

NORTHWEST REGION TEMPERATURE FEBRUARY, 1895–1996

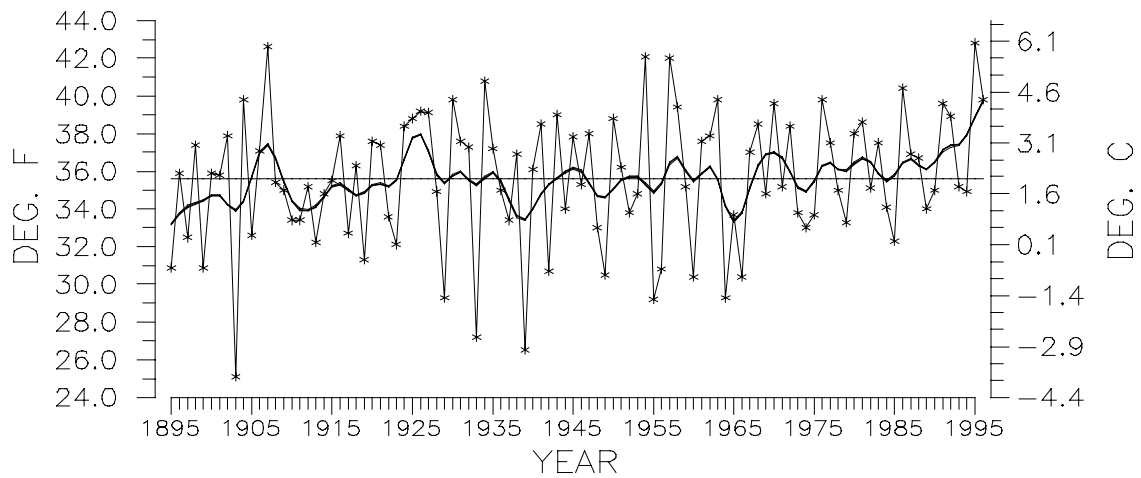


National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

Figure 5

SOUTHWEST REGION TEMPERATURE FEBRUARY, 1895–1996



National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

Figure 6

Figure 7A: Average Annual Temperature by State. The map shows the following average annual temperatures (in degrees Fahrenheit) for each state:

State	Average Annual Temperature (°F)
Alaska	29
Arizona	76
California	88
Colorado	61
Connecticut	55
Delaware	55
District of Columbia	55
Florida	23
Georgia	42
Hawaii	72
Idaho	45
Illinois	58
Indiana	52
Iowa	68
Kansas	68
Kentucky	50
Louisiana	72
Maine	49
Maryland	53
Massachusetts	49
Michigan	40
Minnesota	58
Mississippi	55
Missouri	67
Montana	61
Nebraska	68
Nevada	76
New Hampshire	49
New Jersey	55
New Mexico	76
New York	55
North Carolina	56
North Dakota	61
Ohio	56
Oklahoma	77
Oregon	47
Pennsylvania	55
Rhode Island	55
South Carolina	42
South Dakota	61
Tennessee	50
Texas	72
Utah	68
Vermont	49
Virginia	52
Washington	47
West Virginia	50
Wisconsin	55
Wyoming	61

1 = Coldest
102 = Warmest

A map of the United States where each county is shaded based on its population density. The shading uses three patterns: diagonal lines (top-left to bottom-right) for areas with fewer than 10 people per square mile, horizontal lines for areas between 10 and 25 people per square mile, and a cross-hatch pattern for areas with more than 25 people per square mile. High-density areas are concentrated in the Northeast corridor, around major metropolitan areas like Los Angeles and New York City, and along the West Coast. Low-density areas are predominantly found in the Great Plains and parts of the Mountain West region.

FIGURE 7B: PRECIPITATION

National Climatic Data Center, NOAA



Precipitation Rank Categories for the contiguous United States. Each state is ranked based on its data from 1895-1996. States having a rank in the wet third or dry third of their historical distribution are shaded.

U.S. PERCENT AREA DRY AND WET

JANUARY 1991 THROUGH FEBRUARY 1996

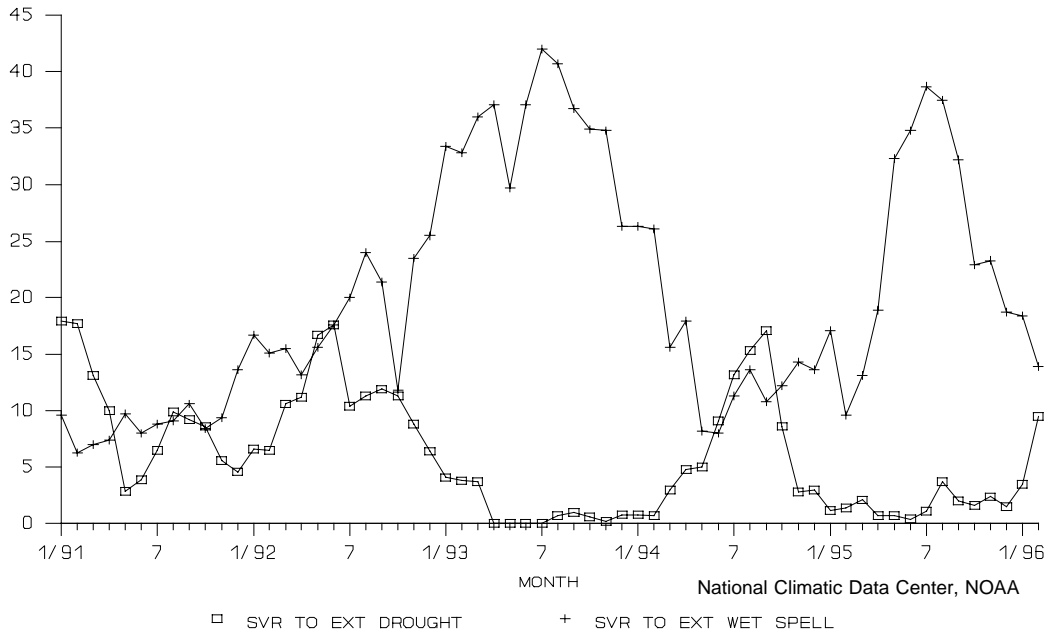
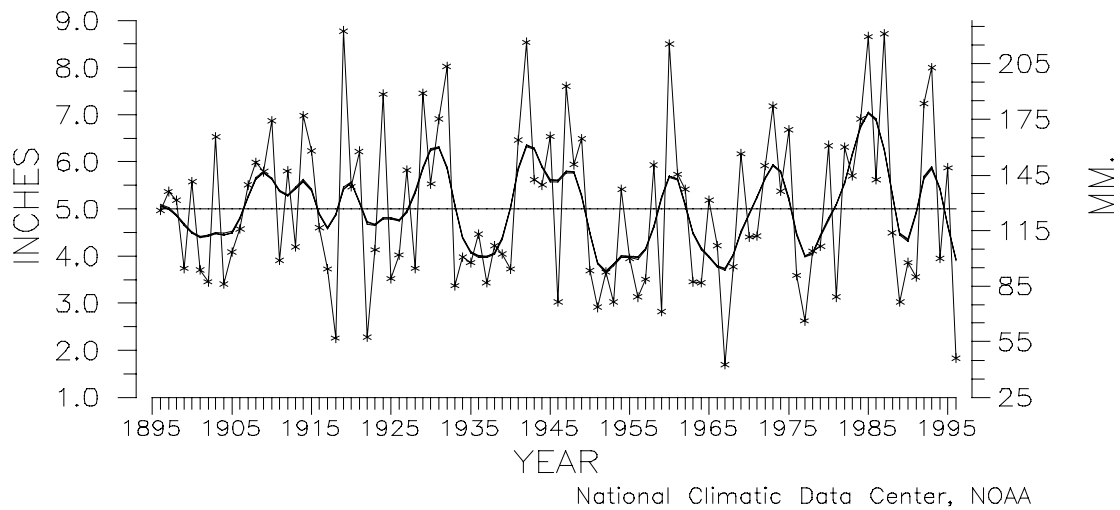


Figure 8

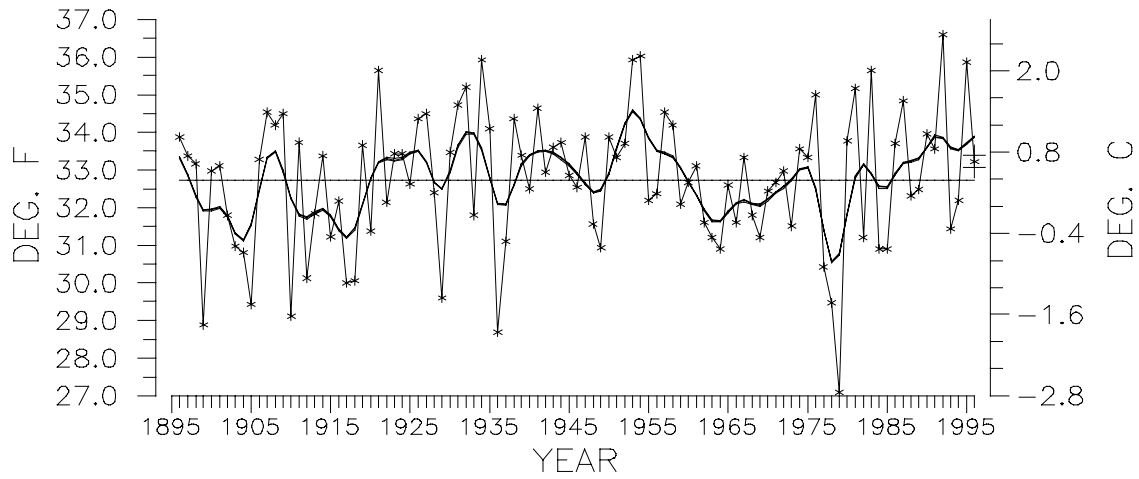
PRIMARY HARD RED WINTER WHEAT BELT PRECIPITATION OCTOBER–FEBRUARY, 1895–96/1995–96



THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

Figure 9

U.S. NATIONAL TEMPERATURE
WINTER (DEC-FEB), 1895-96/1995-96



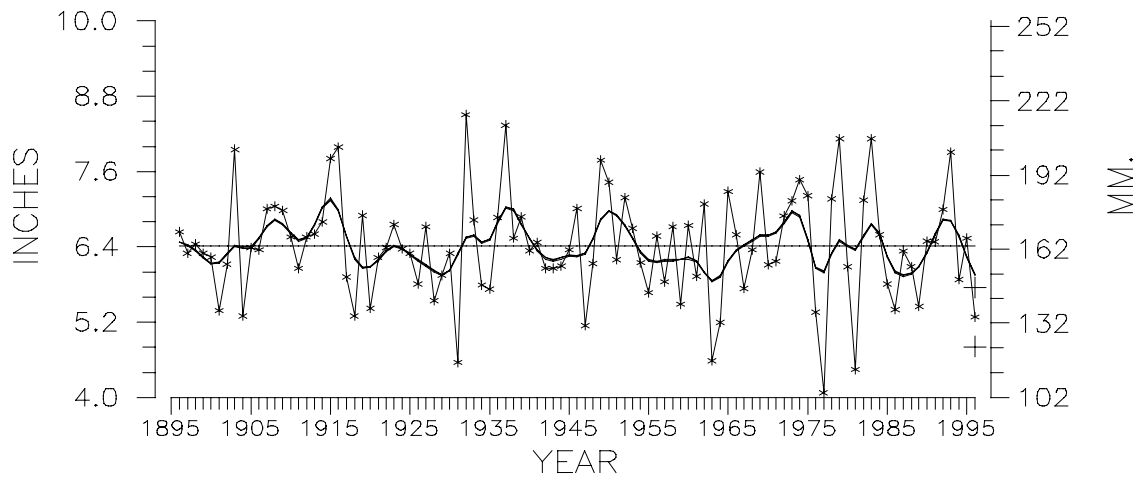
National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
FOR CURRENT YEAR IS
INDICATED BY '+'.
+

Figure 10

U.S. NATIONAL PRECIPITATION
WINTER (DEC-FEB), 1895-96/1995-96



National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
FOR CURRENT YEAR IS
INDICATED BY '+'.
+

Figure 11

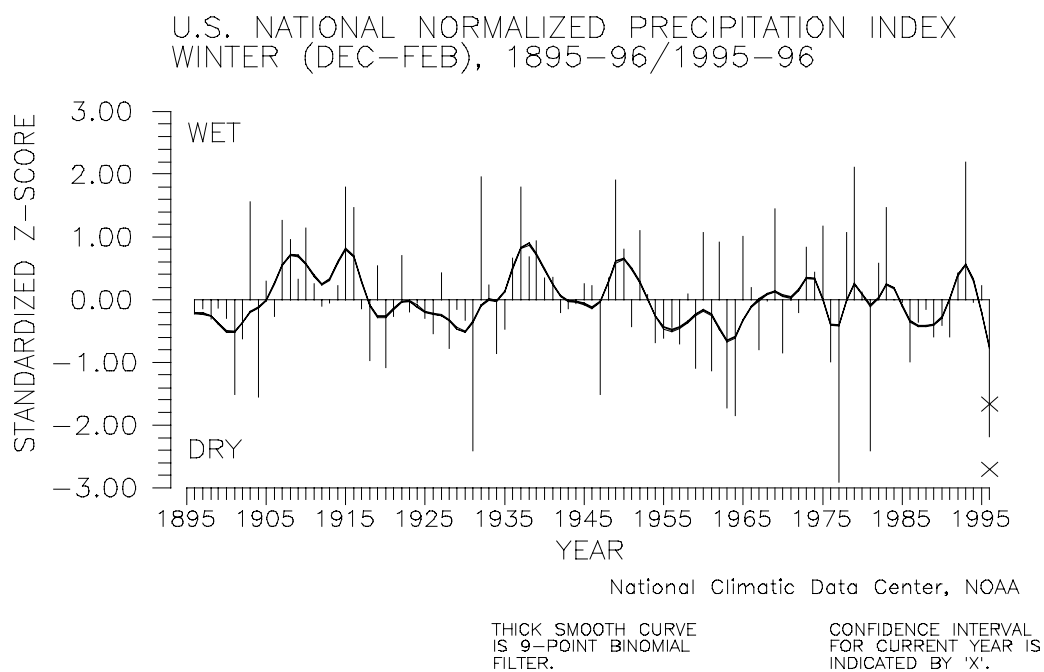


Figure 12

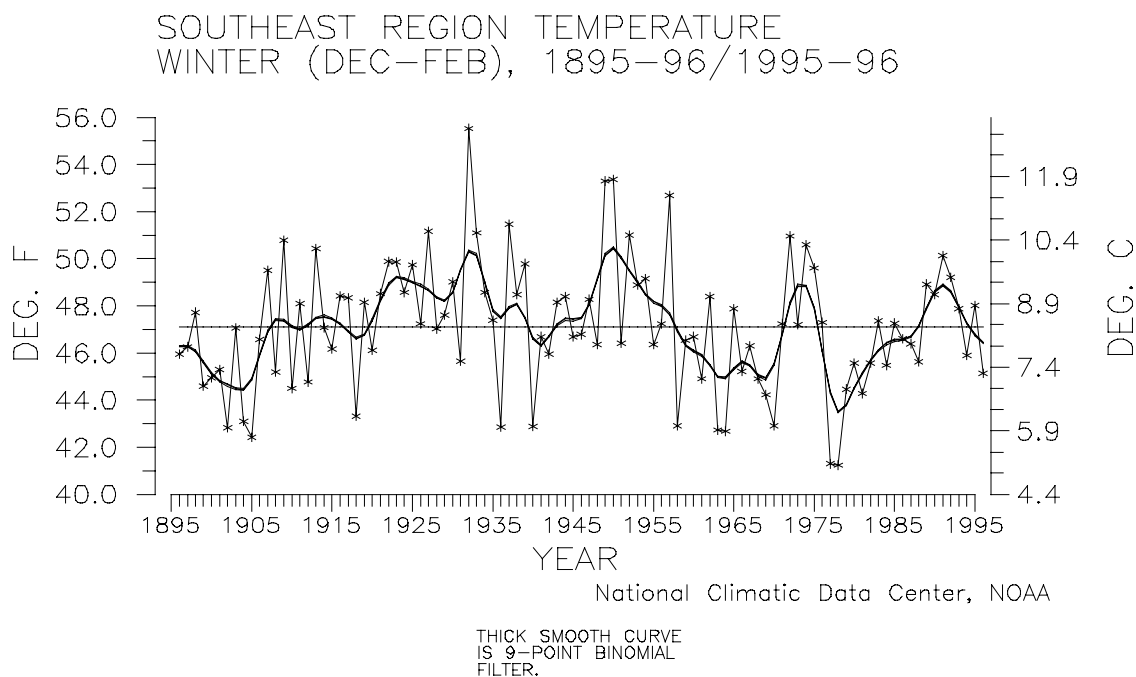
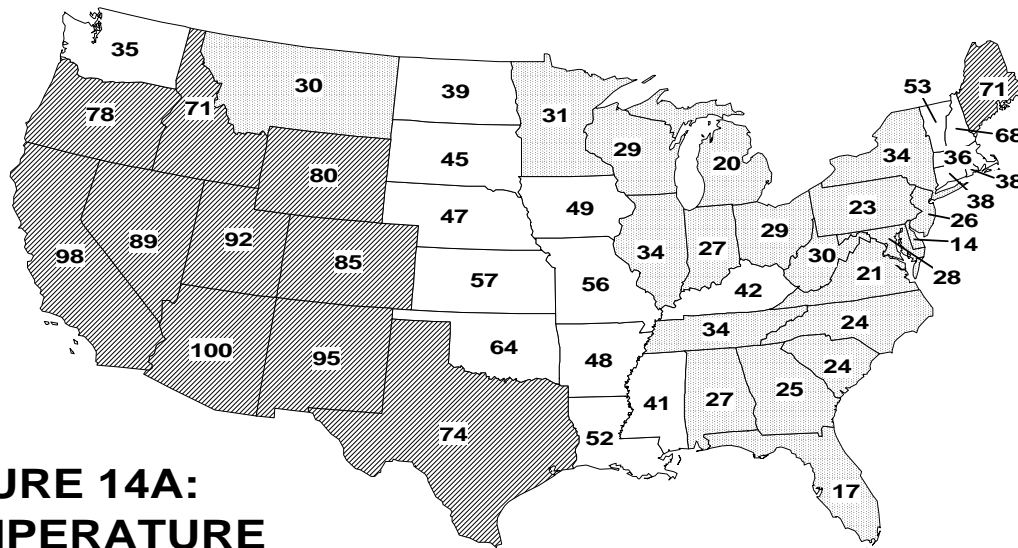


Figure 13

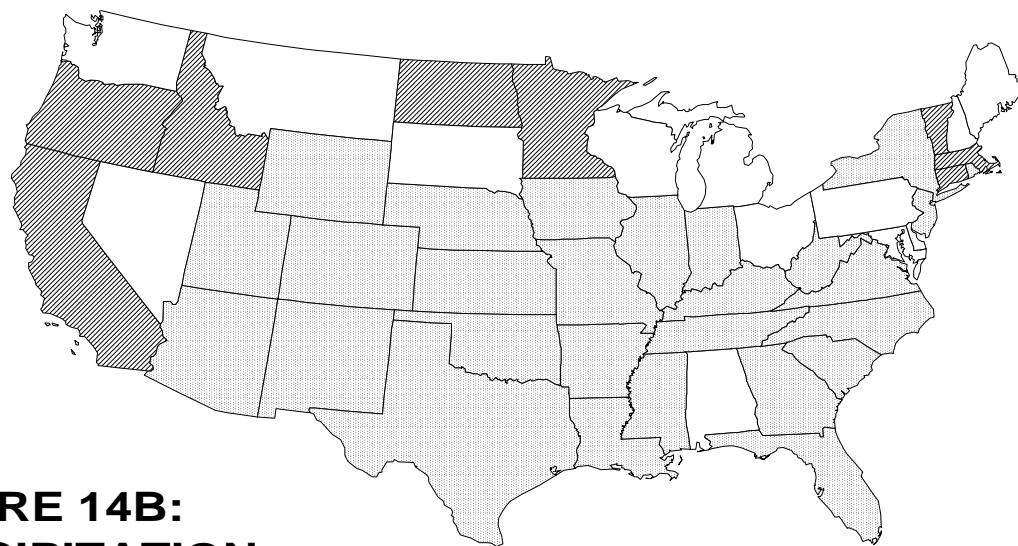
WINTER (DJF), 1995-96 STATEWIDE RANKS



**FIGURE 14A:
TEMPERATURE**

1 = Coldest
102 = Warmest

Temperature Ranks for the contiguous United States. Each state is ranked based on its data from 1895-1996. States having a rank in the warm third or cool third of their historical distribution are shaded.



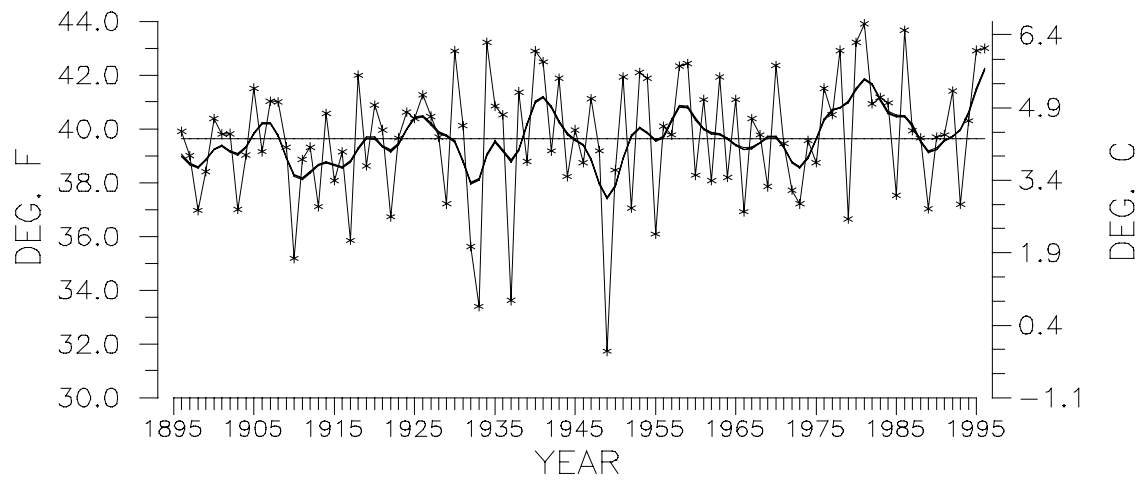
**FIGURE 14B:
PRECIPITATION**

Wet Third
Middle Third
Dry Third

Precipitation Rank Categories for the contiguous United States. Each state is ranked based on its data from 1895-1996. States having a rank in the wet third or dry third of their historical distribution are shaded.

National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

WEST REGION TEMPERATURE WINTER (DEC-FEB), 1895-96/1995-96



National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

THICK SMOOTH CURVE
IS 9-POINT BINOMIAL
FILTER.

Figure 15